

Message Text

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23 FEB 74 QUOTE

O N F I D E N T I A L BUCHAREST 0736

E.O. 11652: XGDS-1

TAGS: PFOR RO XF

SUBJECT: CEAUSESCU'S MIDDLE EAST TRIP CONCLUDED:
GENERAL SUCCESS, SOME FAILURE

1. CEAUSESCU'S TRIP TO IRAQ ENDED WITH EXTREMELY SHORT
COMMUNIQUE, GIVING IMPRESSION OF ALMOST COMPLETE FAILURE
THERE AFTER RELATIVELY SUCCESSFUL VISITS TO LIBYA, LEBANON
AND SYRIA. THIS IMPRESSION WAS ALSO STATED TO CHARGE LAST
NIGHT BY EGYPTIAN AMBASSADOR ASSAL WHO SAID CEAUSESCU HIT
STONE WALL IN IRAQ. ASSAL DESCRIBED IRAQ AS MOST RADICAL
COUNTRY ON BOTH MIDDLE EAST PROBLEM AND ON RELATIONS WITH
ROMANIA. HE WAS SURE ROMANIANS HAD BEEN DENIED OIL BY
IRAQ DESPITE FACT THAT PETROLEUM AND MINING MINISTER BUJOR
ALMASAN HAD GONE AHEAD TO PAVE THE WAY. ASSAL SAID HE
COULD NOT UNDERSTAND WHY CEAUSESCU EVEN WENT TO IRAQ AS ITS
ATTITUDE WAS CLEAR EARLIER; MACOVESCU HAD TOLD ASSAL DAY
BEFORE DEPARTURE THAT TRIP LIMITED TO LIBYA, LEBANON AND
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SYRIA WHICH INDICATED THAT IRAQI AGREEMENT TO RECEIVE

CEAUSESCU ARRIVED AFTER THAT AND IMMEDIATELY PRIOR TO ANNOUNCEMENT THAT IRAQ WAS INCLUDED ON EVE OF CEAUSESCU'S DEPARTURE.

2. ASSAL EXPRESSED VIEW THAT CEAUSESCU HAD DONE WELL IN OTHER THREE COUNTRIES AND THAT SYRIAN POSITION WAS LOOSENING UP. LATER, A MIDDLE LEVEL ROMANIAN OFFICIAL (MFA DEPUTY DIRECTOR ILIESCU) WHO WAS WITH CEAUSESCU IN LEBANON AND SYRIA TOLD CHARGE THAT, WHILE SYRIANS SEEMED TO BE LOOKING FOR WAY TO REACH DISENGAGEMENT, THEY WERE THWARTED BY THEIR OWN INITIAL INTRANSIGENCE AND NEEDED TO "FIND WAY" TO SHIFT THEIR POSITION.

3. SCINTEIA OF FEBRUARY 23 REPORTS EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING CALLED TO HEAR CEAUSESCU REPORT ON HIS TRIP AND UNANIMOUSLY ADOPTED "DECISION" APPLAUDING CEAUSESCU'S WORK. ANOTHER WHOLE PAGE DEVOTED TO PROVINCIAL MESSAGES OF APPROVAL. WHILE NO EDITORIAL HAS APPEARED YET, SCINTEIA FOREIGN POLICY EDITOR CAPLESCU CANCELLED OUT OF DINNER LAST NIGHT ON BASIS OF SUDDEN ORDERS TO PRODUCE MAJOR EDITORIAL ON THE TRIP WHICH WILL PRESUMABLY APPEAR ON SUNDAY.

4. LUMEA EDITOR VOLUNTEERED FEB 22 THAT CEAUSESCU HAD PROBABLY CONVEYED HUSSEIN'S VIEWS ON PALESTINIAN PROBLEM TO ARAFAT IN BEIRUT, SINCE GOR FELT THIS WAS ONE AREA WHERE IT MIGHT BE HELPFUL WITH "GOOD OFFICES". EDITOR DEFINED CEAUSESCU'S "GOOD OFFICES" ROLE IN ME AS LISTENING TO AND CONVEYING WHEN DESIRED THE VARIOUS POINTS OF VIEW WHILE CONSTRUCTIVELY EXPRESSING GOR POSITIONS AND SUGGESTIONS BUT CAREFULLY LEAVING "MEDIATION" TO OTHERS SUCH AS DR. KISSINGER.
MARTENS
NQUOTE SISCO

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